



Testimony of the Connecticut Audubon Society to the Environment Committee
of the Connecticut General Assembly in strong support of H.B. No. 5291 An Act
Authorizing Bonding For Bikeways, Greenways And Recreational Trails.

March 6, 2022

Thank you for the opportunity to lend our strong support to this important proposal.

The Connecticut Audubon Society thanks the Committee and the sponsors of **H.B. No. 5291 An Act Authorizing Bonding for Bikeways, Greenways and Recreational Trails** for this important proposal and for the opportunity to provide our thoughts about this important measure. This bill intends to provide increased funds for greenways and bike and recreational trails. The Connecticut Audubon Society strongly supports improved and equitable access to nature for all the state's peoples. Our founder Mabel Osgood Wright was a firm believer in the concept that people would not appreciate nor care about the conservation of nature if they are not exposed to its beauty and wonders. The Connecticut Audubon Society operates more than 20 miles of trails on our 21 sanctuaries comprising more than 3,300 acres in the state and have worked with regional entities on restoration and improvement efforts on the State's Air Line Trail in Pomfret and in other areas.

We would like to take this opportunity to recognize the risks to our fragile natural resources that illegal or poorly planned trails can cause and strongly recommend that some funding be utilized to monitor, enforce and restore damage from illegal trail establishment on state properties.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important matter.

Patrick M. Comins, Executive Director

Founded in 1898, the Connecticut Audubon Society is an independent organization that conserves Connecticut's environment through science-based education and advocacy focused on the state's bird populations and habitats. We own and manage 20 preserves covering more than 3,300 acres in all areas of the state, and we work with landowners to help them manage their land for the benefit of birds and other wildlife.